## Message Text

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PAGE 01 PONTA 00142 200054Z ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL PONTA DELGADA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 1663
INFO AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMCONSUL OPORTO
COMUSFORAZ
USCINCEUR
CINCLANT

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE PONTA DELGADA 142

E.O. 11652: N/A TAGS: PINT, PO

SUBJ: AZOREAN NOTES

1. STEPS TOWARD FINANCIAL AUTONOMY: THE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY HAS PASSED UNANAMOUSLY THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT'S PROPOSAL ESTABLISHING A FOREIGN EXCHANGE BUDGET FOR THE AZORES FOR 1977. THE PROPOSAL, WHICH WILL BE SUBMITTED TO THE ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC FOR FINAL APPROVAL, WILL GIVE THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT THE AUTHORITY TO CONTROL THE SPENDING OF A QUANTITY, TO BE DETERMINED LATER, OF PORTUGAL'S FOREIGN EXCHANGE. THE ASSEMBLY ALSO APPROVED THE PROPOSAL THAT THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT HAVE THE AUTHORITY TO APPROVE THE OPENING OF NEW BANKING AGENCIES IN THE AZORES. IN THE NEAR FUTURE THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT PLANS TO SUBMIT TO THE REGIONAL ASSEMBLY PROPOSALS FOR A FOREIGN INVESTMENT CODE AND FOR THE CREATION OF A FUND TO STIMULATE AND TO SUBSIDIZE PROVATE INVESTMENT. THESE PROPOSALS WOULD ALSO NEED FINAL APPROVAL BY THE ASSEMBLY OF THE REPUBLIC. THE REGIONAL GOVERNMENT ALSO LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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PLANS TO PROPOSE A REGIONAL FOREIGN EXCHANGE ACCOUNT. HOWEVER, THE STUDY NOW UNDERWAY OF THE REGIONS BALANCE OF PAYMENTS, WHICH IS ESSENTIAL BEFORE AN EXCHANGE FUND CAN BE CREATED, HAS BOGGED DOWN AND IS NOT EXPECTED TO BE COMPLETED FOR SEVERAL MONTHS AT LEAST. THE REGIONAL SECRETARY OF FINANCE HAS DESCRIBED THESE MEASURES AS FUNDAMENTAL TO THE CREATION OF THE FINANCIAL AND ECONOMIC AUTONOMY WHICH THE CONSTITUTION ALLOWS THE AZORES.

2. NO PLANS FOR DEFINITIVE STATUTE OF AUTONOMY: REGIONAL PRESIDENT MOTA AMARAL HAS STATED PUBLICLY THAT HIS GOVERNMENT HAS NO PLANS IN THE NEAR FUTURE TO DRAW UP A DEFINITIVE STATUTE OF AUTONOMY. ACCORDING TO THE LOCAL PRESS A DEFINITIVE STATUTE IS NOW BEING DISCUSSED IN THE MADEIRIAN REGIONAL ASSEMBLY. ALTHOUGH SOME HERE WOULD LIKE TO SEE A DEFINITIVE AZOREAN STATUTE, MOTA AMARAL AND OTHERS BELIEVE IT BEST FIRST TO DEVELOP TO THE FULLEST THE AUTONOMY NOW POSSIBLE UNDER THE CONSTITUTITN AND THE PROVISIONAL STATUTE.

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